



Josh Cocker, left, received a certificate of appreciation from MDE Deputy Secretary Mary Tung

MDE Environmental Science Student Award Application Opens

Best science students in the state encouraged to apply for internship; MDE family members included

MDE will begin accepting applications on Nov. 16 for the agency's Environmental Science Student Award and Internship. The award recognizes high school seniors who have excelled in environmental science both inside and outside the classroom.

Students who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and participation in environmental projects in school or their community such as recycling drives, school beautification projects, stream or litter cleanups and other types of environmental projects are encouraged to apply. The grand prize winner will receive a paid internship at MDE during the summer of 2016. The second-place winner will receive \$500 and the third-place winner will receive \$250.

New this year, the winner's school will receive grant money from MDE to implement an environmental project on school grounds. The deadline for nominations is May 15, 2016. Application forms and instructions are available on MDE's website and may be submitted by email to Intern Coordinator Nadine Jackson-Bey at Nadine.Jackson-Bey@maryland.gov. Family and friends of MDE employees are encouraged to apply.

"The ESSA is a great opportunity for high school seniors who are preparing for the next phase of their lives to receive both resources and real work experiences in a professional setting," Nadine said. "Through the ESSA, the student that wins the internship will be given a great opportunity to work, receive mentorship, as well as shadow executive staff and environmental professionals. During the internship the selected student will receive a wealth of knowledge working on projects that affect Maryland citizens."

Last summer, Josh Cocker, a recent Poolesville High School graduate, was the second recipient of the award and internship. Josh spent his time as an intern with MDE's Office of Secretary working on projects involving legislation, communications, outreach and environmental health and was able to gain experience in project management, graphic design and promotion. He also had the opportunity to learn about other careers at MDE and had the opportunity to shadow employees from different departments and backgrounds.

Josh, now a freshman studying engineering at the University of Maryland, quickly made an impression with his supervisors and peers.

"Josh helped me with two different projects this summer," said ARMA's Lisa Nissley. "He spent time understanding the background of the issues we were working on (legislative projects and environmental justice) and asked very good questions about how everything worked together. I was impressed by how quickly he completed tasks and how comfortable he seemed in a professional environment."

Josh was also impressed with MDE.

"Working in my own cubicle with my own computer and phone gave me the sense that what I meant to MDE was significant. The work I did felt important and positive. Everyone (at MDE) was friendly and willing to provide support," he said. "Although this internship was not along the lines of the engineering career I am pursuing, it brought me closer to the field of sustainability in engineering. I met contacts who can support me in the future when I pursue further work experience and advice."

For more information on the award and internship visit <http://bit.ly/ESSA2016>.